

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

1. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented method for controlling an auction event between a plurality of computer systems on a multi-user and interactive network, the method comprising the steps of:

setting at least one membership duration parameter value for use in precluding a submitted bid of one or more bidders by a seller identifying the at least one membership duration parameter value when registering for an auction at one computer system; and,

automatically precluding the submitted bid of the one or more bidders at other computer systems on the network during the auction event ~~that are identified by the parameter value, wherein the parameter value relates to either a membership history value or a bidding history value of the one or more bidders.~~ if the one or more bidders actual membership duration is less than the at least one membership duration parameter value.

2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the seller sets the at least one membership duration parameter value by an item registration mechanism when registering the auction at the one computer system.

3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 2 wherein the setting of the at least one membership duration parameter value and the registering for an auction event is achieved by allowing the seller to use a user interface.

4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 2 further comprising the step of configuring a bid monitoring mechanism with the at least one membership duration parameter value.

5. (Canceled)

6. (Canceled)

7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 4 wherein ~~a plurality of the~~ at least one membership duration parameter value is ~~values are~~ set by the item registration mechanism for configuring the bid monitoring mechanism so that the submitted bid of the one or more bidders will be precluded if the bid monitoring mechanism identifies if the one or more bidders actual membership duration is less than the at least one membership duration parameter value. ~~at least one of the plurality of parameter values is not identified by the bid monitoring mechanism during the auction.~~

8. (Canceled)

9. (Currently Amended) A computer system adapted for use in a network, the computer system comprising:

a memory containing an item registration application which accepts seller input regarding an auction, and a bid monitoring application, the bid monitoring application is configurable by the seller input; and,

a processor which performs operations comprising: setting at least one membership duration parameter value for use in precluding submitted bids of one or more bidders by a seller identifying the at least one membership duration parameter value when registering for the auction using the item registration application; and,

automatically precluding one or more bids from the one or more bidders at another computer system on the network during the auction event if the one or more bidders actual membership duration is less than the at least one membership duration parameter value. ~~that is identified by the parameter value; wherein the parameter value relates to either a membership history value or a bidding history value of the one or more bidders.~~

10. (Canceled)

11. (Canceled)

12. (Canceled)

13. (Currently Amended) A computer program product adapted to facilitate exclusion of bids automatically prior to bids being entered during an online auction on a computer network, the computer program product comprising:

a medium readable by a computer, the computer readable medium having a computer program code to:

allow a seller to set at least one membership duration parameter value for use in precluding bids of one or more bidders by the seller identifying the at least one membership duration parameter value when registering for an auction at one computer system on a network; and,

automatically precluding bids from users at other computer systems on the network during the auction event if the one or more bidders actual membership duration is less than the at least one membership duration parameter value. ~~that are identified by the at least one parameter value, wherein the at least one parameter value relates to either a membership history value or a bidding history value of the one or more bidders.~~

14. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 13 wherein the seller sets the at least one membership duration parameter value by an item registration mechanism when registering the auction at the one computer system.

15. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 13 wherein the setting of the at least one membership duration parameter value and the registering for the auction event is achieved by allowing the seller to use a graphical user interface.

16. (Currently amended) The computer program product of claim 15 further comprising a bid monitoring mechanism that is configurable with the at least one membership duration parameter value.

17. (Canceled)

18. (Canceled)

19. (Currently Amended) A computer network implemented method of processing an online auction event in a multi-user networked environment, between a plurality of bidder client computer systems, an internet service provider server computer system, and a seller at a client computer system, comprising the steps of:

receiving at the server a request from a seller client computer system for the auction to sell a good and/or service, the server comprising a main memory including: an item registration application and a bid monitoring application; a processor, and database storage for identifying and tracking files associated respectively with the seller and bidders;

receiving seller information at the server through the item registration application which information is stored in the database storage and at least one membership duration parameter value that is set by the seller and which the at least one membership duration parameter value is used for configuring the bid monitoring application; and,

monitoring submitted bids at the server from bidder clients by cross referencing the submitted bids in accordance with the membership duration parameter value in the database for determining automatically if the submitted bid is to be precluded from being considered in the auction event if the one or more bidders actual membership duration is less than the at least one membership duration parameter value. ~~; wherein the parameter value relates to either a membership history value or a bidding history value of the one or more bidders.~~

20. (Canceled)

PATENT – AMENDMENT AFTER FINAL  
Response under 37 CFR 1.116  
Expedited Procedure  
Examining Group: 3626

21. (Canceled)

22. (Canceled)

23. (Canceled)

24. (Canceled)

25. (Canceled)